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THE ILLINOIS ISSUE

The Church in Action Against the Saloon

Vol. I

Chicago and Downers Grove, Illinois, January 19, 1906

No. 1

GREETINGS TO OUR FRIENDS

Reasons Why We Need Our Own State Paper

In sending out this first edition of The Illinois Issue the Anti-Saloon League of our state takes another advance step and enters upon a new era of usefulness.

We acknowledge our gratitude to The American Issue, the Ohio state organ, for the splendid work it has done for the cause in the state of Illinois. In the recent campaign against Governor Herrick and the liquor forces of that state there was, doubtless, no single power that struck more terrific and telling blows for the cause of righteousness and had a more widespread influence for temperance, and was more of a factor in the final decision at the polls than this same paper. The thousands of Illinois voters who have eagerly read its pages during the last few months have been thrilled by the account it gave of the splendid victory of the allied forces of the church over the united forces of the saloon. We are glad also for the opportunity afforded our Superintendent to express through its columns from week to week, to its thousands of Illinois subscribers, much useful and encouraging information in regard to our own state work.

But many of the friends of the Anti-Saloon League of Illinois feel that the time has come for our state to have its own paper, that our League has reached such a stage of development that it is absolutely imperative to have such a newsbearer if we are to continue our present rate of progress.

The campaign for the nomination of members of the next legislature is now open. Primaries will be held in the latter part of April. Under the new Primary Law, this preliminary campaign is of great importance, as those nominated are likely to be elected. It is of the utmost importance that the friends of temperance should be kept fully informed as to the political situation in their various districts. This we will be able to do through the columns of our own weekly paper as we cannot possibly do in any other way. We therefore ask that you read it carefully and then pass it on to your neighbors.

As to the character of the paper, it is not our object to furnish a fine literary sheet. There are plenty of other papers and periodicals that have the space to spare and the means to command the talent for such work. Our purpose is to set before the people of this state, in a plain way, plain facts in regard to the greatest enemy of the home, the church and the state, and the greatest lawbreaker in civilization—the organized liquor traffic. This shall be our one object, and we shall refuse to be turned aside to any other except those things that are so closely allied as that they cannot be ignored. The organization it represents is inter-denominational, omni-partisan, and seeks to unite all temperance people of all religious faiths and political creeds on the question of temperance reforms. Our motto has been and will continue to be, "The church in action against the saloon." We shall take an uncompromising stand for a local option law that shall give the people the direct power to vote on the question of "saloon or no saloon." To this end we shall, in the language of our Michigan contemporary: "Ask for all we want, take what we can get, immediately renew our demands for what we do not get, and keep everlastingly at it until we do get it."

We believe that we have the greatest state and the best people in the Union, not even excepting the state of Ohio, and that the recent splendid victory for our cause in that state can be duplicated, if necessary, by the Christian voters of Illinois. We invite the co-operation of the temperance people of our commonwealth to assist in making this paper the success it ought to be in the dissemination of temperance news. If you have an item of interest, send it in. We cannot always promise to print it, but we will do the best we can to furnish you from week to week what, in our judgment, is of importance to our cause. We wish to be your servant in this respect.

This paper will be sent to all subscribers of the League on the same basis as that upon which The American Issue has been sent heretofore. It will be, as this sample indicates, an eight-page weekly. While it is only one-half the size of the Ohio paper, it will contain many of the amount of Illinois matter. We have neither the time nor the means, at present, to edit a larger edition. We hope to do better by and by.